



CHAIRMANSHIP

Following the request in the Summer Newsletter for candidates to take over as Chairman of ERA, unfortunately we have had no responses whatsoever & personal approaches have also met no confirmed success to date. Mainly because of health reasons, Chris Fisher has thus decided to officially step down effective from 6th September. Chris says that “chairing ERA has been an honour & a privilege but I have now been on the front-line of ERA battles for too long”.



We want to thank Chris for all his efforts over the last 3 years & we believe he has made residents very proud of his approach to the problems of Egham Town.

However, it is now thought that any change would officially happen at the next AGM in February, after a vote of the membership. In the meantime, Graham Basset, as Vice-Chairman (pictured right), has agreed to stand in for Chris until the AGM.

While we now have a possible candidate who we want to pursue further, if any other member would also now be interested in standing as Chairman, then please contact either Graham on basset@eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk or the Secretary on adrianskelt@eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk.

As requested in the last Newsletter, we are also looking to find extra, younger & more active members for our Committee. If any member would be interested in participating in our monthly meetings & various events, then please also contact the Secretary on adrianskelt@eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk.



**POOLEY GREEN
CROSSING CLOSURE
(1 - 10th October)**



Network Rail has now advised that the Pooley Green level crossing, on Vicarage Road in Egham, will be closed from Saturday 1st to Monday 10th October whilst engineers carry out upgrade work to make it safer and more efficient. Vicarage Road will be closed throughout and both road traffic and pedestrians will need to use alternative routes. A shuttle service will be available to transport pedestrians to the opposite side of the crossing, if they are unable to use the diversionary route. NB. **The local diversions will be substantial & likely to cause many delays.**

There will also be closures on the South Western Railway (SWR) network, affecting trains in the Egham area, on the weekends of Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd, plus Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th October. The lines in the Staines area will be closed both weekends for maintenance work & Longcross station will be closed both weekends. You can find out more about changes to train services by following the link below: <https://www.southwesternrailway.com/plan-my-journey/planned-improvements/october-2022-works>.

The upgrade is part of our Feltham-Wokingham Re-signalling Programme, a £375 million programme between 2021 and 2024, to upgrade 1970s signalling controlled by Wokingham signal box and Feltham Area Signalling Centre. These jointly covers 80 miles of railway and 500 separate pieces of signalling equipment, on key areas of the South Western Railway (SWR) network including Feltham, Hounslow, Shepperton, Twickenham, Windsor & Eton Riverside and Wokingham.

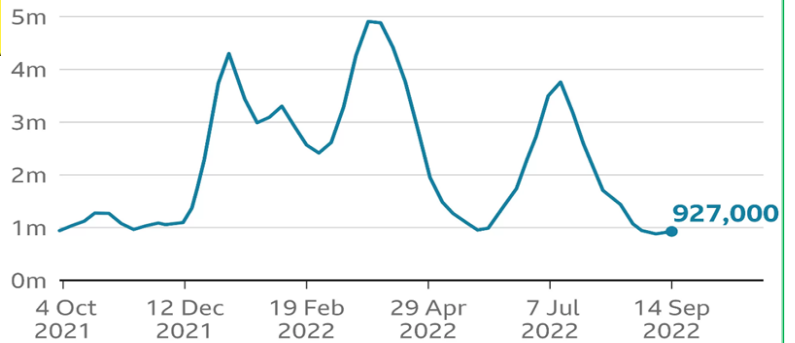
Existing equipment - signals, the traffic light system for the railway, and track circuits, which tell signallers where trains are on the network - dates back to 1974 and is becoming harder and harder to maintain. In a long-term programme that will run through to mid-2024, Network Rail are renewing that equipment with a modern equivalent that will be more reliable - & hopefully result in fewer crossing downtimes?

CORONAVIRUS

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

UK infections rise slightly

Estimated people testing positive for coronavirus



Source: Office for National Statistics, 23 Sep

BBC

Covid infection rates have increased in the UK for the first time since the middle of July, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Covid cases are shooting up again after a six-week decline with the return to school and cooler weather helping to spread the virus. Daily symptomatic infections have increased by 42 per cent in three weeks, rising from 101,600 on August 27th - their lowest level this year - to 144,813 on September 19th. They are predicting infections will hit a new high in late October or early November that is considerably higher than previous records, fuelled by the current dominant Omicron variant, BA.5, which is much more transmissible than previous dominant variants.

Steve Griffin, a Leeds University virologist, added: "We remain in a highly unstable & 'unmitigated' scenario due to the over-reliance upon vaccines in isolation. Waning protection from infection, combined with changes in behaviour mean that BA5 is to rebound - e.g. with schools, universities & workplaces returning & more time spent indoors without open windows, & the near-abandonment of masking". Figures have shown that generally the Omicron variant is much less likely to leave someone in hospital than previous strains of the virus. High levels of antibodies, from both natural infection and vaccines, are thought to be behind the fall in the number of deaths.

A Covid vaccination programme has so far reached nine in 10 people aged 12 and over with a first dose. Booster jabs are being offered to the most vulnerable to help protection during winter. From 6th September care home residents, staff and people who are housebound are being offered another booster jab, with the rest of the over-50s to follow in the next few weeks. NHS Director of vaccinations and screening, Steve Russell, said: "There is no room for complacency in keeping Covid-19 on the back foot and this Autumn booster will help protect those most at risk".

MAGNA SQUARE

The development was officially opened on 30th July & the new Everyman cinema had its opening on 23rd September. Magna Square development has also been shortlisted for the British Homes Awards Regeneration Scheme of the Year - which will be competing against development projects including the creation of a new neighbourhood on London's Olympic Park, a refurbishment of the former Nestlé factory in Hayes, & the regeneration of Europe's largest Grade II listed building in Sheffield. Cllr Tom Gracey, RBC Leader, said: "It is fantastic to see Magna Square being recognised for another accolade, this time in the British Home Awards' showcase of leading regeneration projects".



GRAVEL RAISING - THE ONGOING SAGA



SCC have now announced that their Planning & Regulatory Committee review of the gravel planning application for Milton Park Farm has been further delayed to 7th December (that's 14 years after the application was originally submitted!) - with the Whitehall Farm application still planned for review on 16th November.

Both applications will almost certainly be delayed further, as the new SCC update of the Surrey Minerals Plan has also been delayed, in its Preferred Options stage, from ending this October to starting in June 2023 - due to the stated reason that too many objections/comments were raised in the 1st stage (Issues & Options) which closed last March. This delay means that a new Surrey Minerals Plan will likely not be enacted before early 2025.

The summary Issues & Option report seeks to provide a quantitative summary of general themes emerging from material representations & feedback provided by stakeholders to the November 2021 to March 2022 consultation. The report can be found at https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/308479/MWLP-Issues-and-Options-Summary-of-Responses-Report-v3-1-1.pdf



CLEAN UP EGHAM (10-11th August)

Led by Cllrs Sam Jenkins & Sian Williams, a team of resident volunteers came together to make Egham High Street look a bit tidier on 10th & 11th August! Many thanks to all who have either volunteered or supported us in spirit - including this wonderful team opposite, who cleared the central Egham High Street area, removing hundreds of cigarette butts and improving the state of the road kerbs dramatically. The difference it has made is very visible and we are looking to organise more clean-up efforts around the Town Ward in the coming months.

As a by-product, many thanks to Tesco's for reducing the trolleys at the front of their store - the space is so much better and the bench behind the fountain is more accessible.

There has now been announced that a further Clean Up event is planned for the Fairhaven area (near the Library) for 1st October between 10.00 - 12.00am. In the meantime, Councillors will be meeting with the RBC Environmental Services team to address some of the longer term causes of High Street rubbish.

EGHAM ROYAL SHOW (27-28th August)

The Egham Royal Show (ERS) was back in action on August Bank Holiday, having been cancelled for the last 2 years due to the pandemic. Despite the ERA stall being out of the way (due to changes in the ERS parking arrangements), there had been good footfall for the Show, especially on the Saturday. After a surprisingly dry & warm 2 days, the ERA stall made a profit of £135 but, after the booking cost for the stall, we only made a very modest £15 overall profit.



Nevertheless, many thanks to those that helped man/woman the stall during the 2 days, including those in the photo above where the RBC Mayor, Cllr Margret Harden, visited the stall.



EGHAM BARN DANCE (27th August)

As reported in the Summer Newsletter, we had originally decided to not take up the



invitation by the ERS to hold our normal Barn Dance on the Saturday evening, due to the complete lack of volunteers coming forward at that time to help run the event.

However, with a determined last-minute effort led by Jim Pearcey - ably assisted by Glenda Thisdell & Sian Williams - especially on gaining sponsorship funds, & despite the very late organisation, a successful Barn Dance was actually put on with over 120 tickets sold. Although the ticket price was probably too low this year, overall the ticket sales & the raffle met the expenditure for the event (fish & chips, the Local Yokels band & printing etc) & the sponsorship funds (of £800 so far) was split 50% to ERA & 50% to ERS. Once again, thanks also go to the Pearcey family, who have been co-ordinating this Dance since it began, & significantly contribute to one of the ERA's biggest annual fundraising event.

Community Fair

Promoting local charities and groups

1st October

Unfortunately, due to the lack of charities prepared to participate in this year's event, we have had to cancel this year's ERA Community Fair, which was to be held on 1st October in the United Church in the High Street.

Our Fair aims to provide local (not for profit) groups & charities a space or table to promote themselves by providing information, selling products or talking to visitors with no cost to the table holders. We now look forward to re-establishing the event in 2023.....

Alerts on issues that arose between Newsletters this quarter covered :

- a) RBC Parking Guidance Planning (1/7)
- b) Covid Champions Briefing (1/7)
- c) Clean Up Egham Campaign (4/7)
- d) RHUL Community Liaison (20/7)
- e) Barn Dance at Egham Royal Show (27/8)
- f) Runnymede Health Survey (23/8)
- g) Pooley Green Crossing Closure (1-10/10)
- h) Everyman Cinema Opening (23/9)
- i) Runnymede Muslim Society (10/9)
- j) Giant Sale (24/9)
- k) Clean Up Egham (1/10)
- l) Covid Champions Briefing (23/9)



Contact Glenda Thisdell on 07905 917440 or glendathisdell@eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk to be sent email alerts

7th December



Egham Choral is a friendly, un-auditioned, choral society who welcomes new singers in all voice parts & sing a wide range of music, from classical & modern choral works to fun short pieces. This season they will be singing a folk-inspired Christmas medley, Alexander L'Estrange's Wassail! in St Johns Church on 7th December from 7.30pm.

Tickets will be £15 (or £5 for under 18s & students) & will be available in November from www.eghamchoral.org/tickets or on 07764 823299 - & will include mince pies & mulled cider!



ERA COMMITTEE

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Vacant

Vice-Chairman

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Vacant (temporarily filled by Aneesh Gupta)

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Isabel Mullens

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Sian Williams

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Surrey County

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17th December

The Egham Chamber of Commerce are again organising a Christmas Fair in the High Street on Saturday 17th December from 11.00 to 16.00. As last year a range of stalls selling food, drinks & gifts are expected plus a Santa's Grotto, carol singing & fairground rides plus there will be an ERA stall.

For a stall contact Cynthia Reilly on 01784 431019 or cr@kseakens.co.uk

HER MAJESTY

Everyone at ERA shares the sadness & grief of the entire

nation on the death of Queen Elizabeth II & wish to offer our condolences to the Royal Family.

On behalf of the members of ERA, we would like to pay tribute to the dedication & service of the late Queen Elizabeth II. For many of us it is strange to find ourselves in a world without the Monarch who presided over the UK throughout our entire lives.

We also proclaim the accession of His Majesty King Charles III - God Save The King.



Website : www.eghamresidentsassociation.co.uk



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